(d) the months and years during which crude prices ranged between 45 to 50 Dollar per Barrel in the international market?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) and (b) International prices of crude oil and petroleum products have remained volatile in the recent past. International prices of crude oil have come down since August, 2008 and the average price of Indian Basket of crude oil during November, 2008 was $ 50.91 per barrel, and during December, 2008 (upto 10th) was $ 41.72 per barrel. However, the average price of Indian Basket of crude oil during 2008-09 remains at $ 100.34 per barrel upto 10.12.2008.

(c) The prices of Petrol, Diesel and Domestic LPG were increased on 5th June, 2008 by Rs.5/- per litre, Rs.3/- per litre and Rs.50/- per 14.2 kg. cylinder at Delhi, with corresponding increase in the rest of the country. The Indian Basket of crude oil on 5th June, 2008 was $ 119.81 per barrel. In May, 2008, the Indian basket of crude oil averaged $ 120.91 per barrel. At this level of international oil prices, the quantum of increase in domestic prices should have been much higher.

(d) During the year 2004-05, the annual average price of Indian Basket of crude oil was below $ 45 per barrel and it remained above $ 50 per barrel during the years 2005-06, 2006-07, 2007-08 and 2008-09 (upto 10th December 2008).

The periods during which the average monthly Indian Basket of crude oil prices ranged between $ 45 per barrel to $ 50 per barrel in the international market, since April 2005, are given below :

Price of Indian Basket of crude oil

Month	$ per barrel
March, 2005	49.27
April, 2005	49.43
May, 2005	47.02
November, 2008	50.91
December, 2008 (Upto 10th)	41.72

In view of the fall in international oil prices, the prices of Petrol and Diesel have been reduced by Rs.5/- per litre and Rs.2/- per litre (at Delhi) with effect from 6.12.2008.

Moderation in revenue growth

*217. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Empowered Committee of the State Finance Ministers have expressed apprehension that the global financial meltdown can lead to a moderation in revenue growth;

(b) if so, whether the Committee during its meeting decided on a number of measures to be taken;

(c) if so, what are the main recommendations made by the Committee and to what extent Government has agreed to implement their suggestions; and

(d) whether any final decision for implementation has been considered?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM) : (a) to (d) The Empowered Committee at its meeting held on 3rd November, 2008 in Chandigarh discussed the issue of the impact of the global financial meltdown on their revenue growth. The Committee did not decide on any measures to be taken. However, some States have recently started experiencing lower rate of growth in their tax collection and apprehend that eventually it may adversely affect their revenues.

Merger of posts

*218. SHRI KAMAL AKHTAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 369 given in the Rajya Sabha on 21st October, 2008 and state:

(a) the date from which the merger of posts in the pre-revised scales of Rs.6500-10500 and Rs.7450-11500 has been made effective;

(b) the details of the posts so merged, Ministry-wise and Department-wise;

(c) the details of the procedure followed to decide the *inter-se* seniority of the cadre after the merger of the posts; and

(d) if no such directions have been issued, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL) : (a) to (d) As per the recommendations of the Sixth Central Pay Commission, certain posts in the pre-revised scales of Rs.6500-10500 and Rs.7450-11500 have been merged with effect from 1.1.2006. These posts are spread across various Ministries and Departments. Merger of the scales will have no impact on the *inter-se* seniority which existed as on 1.1.2006.

Air turbine fuel under declared goods category

*219. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering any proposal to declare the Air Turbine Fuel (ATF) under declared goods category;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when decision is likely to be taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) Government is yet to take a final view on Ministry of Civil Aviation's proposal to place Aviation Turbine Fuel in the category of "declared goods" under the CST Act, 1956.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.